H Johnson (4)

THE
Humble Confession, and just Vindication of them who have suffered much, and still suffer under the names of *Malignants* or *Delinquents*.

Together with the Church of *ENGLANDS* Complaint, and Plea.

As also the feeling Lamentation of a Compassionate *Sonne*, for his much distressed and unjustly Defamed *Mother*, the Church of *England*.

By a Peaceable Sonne of the same Church, no way addicted to Novelty *or* Faction. Vel dent Alvie vicar viz.. of Newcastle upon Tine

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The Time will come, when they will not endure sound Doctrine, but after their own Lusts, shall heape to themselves Teachers, having itching Eares, 2 *Tim.* 4. 3.

Alia est sella terrena, aliud Tribunal caelorum ab inferiore sententia accipitur, a superiore corona, Aug. in Psal. 76.

The judgement of men on Earth, is not alwayes the same with the judgement of God in Heaven, a man may be condemned by his inferiour Judge on Earth, when he shall receive a Crown from his superiour Judge in Heaven.

Quicunque mens, &c. VVhoever for fear of any mortall Power shall in the Truth (that is, doth not freely Declare and Publish it) he provokes Gods wrath against himselfe, as one that feareth Man more than God, *Idem.*

Printed in the Year, 1647.

WHITE-HEAD

Courteous and Christian READER.

I *Have written these three small ensuing Tractats in a very familiar stile, and taught them to speake plain English, that every one even of the meanest, most vulgar capacity, who can reade English, and understand what he Reades, might Reade and understand them: They speak Truth, and Truth would be understood by all,* & nihil erubescit nisi solummodo abscondi, *and blushes at nothing more, saith* Tertullian, *then to be hid from the notice of any. Know then that I have purposely used plainesse of speech, that thou mayst with more ease comprehend those plaine Truths which are here held forth, and presented to thy view: If thou beest a favourer of Truth, they shall finde thy favourable acceptance, though they come forth in such an homely Dresse, and he shall not want thy friendly respect, who durst be Truths rightfull advocate in these perillous Times, when few dare own such Truths, fewer pleade for them against those who seek to oppresse them.*

Nazianzen *complaines of some, That did fit their Faith to the Time, and so made it* fidem temporum potius quam Evangeliorum, *a Temporizing rather then an Evangelicall Faith, as Hilary speaks, but I am no*

Orat. 27. ad Constant. Aug.

time-server, to humour or please the Times; should I study to please them, I might have menstruam fidem, *a*
Hall. p. 308. *Faith to be new Minted every Moneth, like that of the* Arrians, *which was* annua aut menstrua, *changeable every Yeare, nay every Moneth.* The Times under *Diocleſian*, were Pagan; under *Constantine*, Christian; under *Constantius*, Arrian; under *Julian*, Apostate; under *Jovian*, Christian againe; and all within the age of a [illegible] the terme of seventy yeares, and would it not have wrench't and sprain'd his Soule with short turning, saith *Fuller*, who in all these should have been of the Religion for the time being: (holy State, book 3. cap. 19. pag. 204.) *Let the Times then please themselves [illegible], my speciall care shall be to please him, who [illegible], to whom one day I must be accountable,* 1 Thes. 2. 4.

If thou think fit to Reade what I have written, thou may'st, if otherwise, thou art left to thy free choyce to [illegible] what thou wilt; these three meane pieces are but [illegible] or preparatives to a more elaborate Treatise, which shall discover to thee the most dangerous errors of the Times, and shew them briefely, yet fully confuted, in all [illegible] thy good, to settle thee in these ancient Truths, which were once for all delivered to the Saints, Iude 3. *that thou might'st not be carried about with every Winde of vaine Doctrine,* Ephes. 4. 14. *or inveigled by the cogging subtilty of seducing Spirits, which God in Justice hath permitted to come abroad in great multitudes for the seduction of this present evil world, of whom beware.*

Farewell.

The

The humble Confession, and just Vindication of them who have suffered much, and doe yet suffer under the Names of Malignants *and* Delinquents.

THe Lord our God, as by his omnipotent [a] Word he made all things, so he ordereth [b] all things, by his most wise Providence, even to an [c] handful of Meale in a Barrell, to a little oyle in a poore widdows cruse, to the feeding of [d] young Ravens, the cloathing of [e] Lillies, to the lighting of a [f] Sparrow on the ground, the falling of a superfluous haire from the Head, to the casting of a Lot into the lap, to the meanest, lowest, and [illegible] & casuall occurrents; and there is no [illegible] affliction, calamity, judgement, that hath be[illegible] or any other, but God hath had a speciall [illegible] ordering, limiting, disposing it: This we who are usually stiled by the opprobrious names of *Malignants* and *Delinquents* doe freely confesse and acknowledge; and we further confesse, to the honour of Divine Justice, that all God's Judgements are [k] just, and that he hath afflicted us [l] justly, that he is [m] just in all that is come upon us, that [n] Righteousness belongeth unto him, unto us nothing but shame and confusion of face.

Wherefore overlooking all those whom he hath used

[a] Gen. 1.
[b] Pro. 15. 3.
[c] 1 Kings 17. 14.
[d] Psal. 147. 9.
[e] Mat. 6. 28.
[f] Mat. 10. 29. 30.
[g] Pro. 16. 33.
[h] *Fortuitum occulto quodam ordine regitur. Aug. contr. Acad. lib. 1.*
[i] Amos. 3. 6. Esay 45. 7. Lam. 3. 38.
[k] Gen. 18. 25. Ezek. 18. 25. 29. Rom. 3. 5. 6. Psal. 119. 137.
[l] Psal. 119. 75.
[m] Nehem. 9. 33.
[n] Dan. 9. 7.

o Esay. 10. 5 as o Rods for our correction, and looking up to him who
p Gen. 14. 22 is the p high possessor of Heaven and Earth, the supreme
q Psal. 33. 13. 14. q Guide and Moderator of the world, in the midst of our afflictions and tribulations, we becken to our soules for patience, and kisse the rod in silence, and give glory to
r 1 Sam. 3. 18 the hand that ordered it, saying with old r *Ely*, It is the
s Job 1. 21. Lord, let him doe what he pleaseth; and with s *Job* that patterne of patience, The Lord hath given, and the Lord hath taken away many of those temporall blessings which he gave us, blessed, ever blessed be his holy name.

And so farre are we from repining at, or complaining of his Judgements, as if they were too severe, extreame, rigorous, or unjust, that when in our retired thoughts we seriously *reflect* upon our selves, and pensively consider what undeserving, what ill-deserving creatures we have been? how unthankfull we have been for our long continued Peace and Plenty? how unfruitfull under the means of Grace, which for a long time God hath graciously vouchsaft unto us? how neglective we have been of his publique worship and service, and how by our manifold great and grievous sins (too many to be numbred) we have
t Gen. 32. 10 rendred our selves unworthy of the t least of his mer-
u Esay. 1. 9. Rom. 9. 29. cies, and most worthy of the u greatest of his Judgments? We cannot but adore and magnifie his infinite goodnesse and mercy, and cry out in the words of the lamen-
w Lam. 3. 22 ting Prophet *Jeremy*, It is meerely from the w mercy of the Lord that we are not consumed, had he not in Judgement remembred mercy, had his compassions failed towards us, we had long ere this failed and perished in our afflictions.

But though on Gods part we are ready to justifie him in all his proceedings against us, and doe acknowledge all his wayes to be just and equall, and that he hath justly

avenged

avenged the quarrell of our Baptismall [a] Covenant upon us by the Sword, which we have violated a thousand thousand times; and though we confesse to the prayse of his mercy, as well as of his Iustice, that he hath punished us farre [y] lesse then our sins have deserved; yet we cannot on the other part Iustifie those who have blemisht our credits with the odious foule aspersion of *Malignants* and *Delinquents*, imprisoned our bodies, ransackt our houses, seized, pillaged, plundred our goods, sequestred our estates, turned our innocent children out of doores to shift for themselves, and exposed both us and them to many pressing wants and miseries: nor can we conceive their quarrell against us to be just, howsoever by their art and cunning subtilty, to cozen the people, and to make it plausible and passable amongst them, they disguise, paint, and varnish it over with the guilded pretences of Iustice and Religion.

[a] Levit. 26. 25.

[y] Ezra 9. 13.

For be it granted, as it cannot be denied, That they were the subordinate instrumentall causes under God to inflict those Iudgements upon us which our sins have deserved, yet this cannot cleare them from injustice, unlesse they can prove withall, that what they have done to us, was done meerly for those just causes, and holy ends, for which our gracious and righteous God, in his gracious, wise and Iust dispensation, would have us to be so severely corrected, and punished.

One and the same Act, may be well, or ill, Iustly or unjustly done, according to the divers causes or different ends for which it is done, as appeares in *Josephs* brethren [z] selling, and Gods sending him into *Egypt*; in the [a] *Sabeans* violently taking away *Jobs* Cattell by Robbery, and [a] Gods taking them away; in the [b] high Priests, Scribes, and Pharisees, plotting Christs death, *Pilates* sentencing

[z] Gen. 27. 28. *compared with* Gen. 45. 5. 50. 20.

[a] Job 1. 15. *compared with* 21.

[b] Acts 3. 29.

sentencing him to Death, in *Judas* betraying, and Gods delivering him up to be Crucified; *Joseph's* Brethren, the *Sabæans*, the high Priests, Scribes, Pharisees, *Judas*, & *Pilate* did the same things which God ordered to be done, but not for the same Just causes, or holy ends; and this made Gods Act most Just and holy, whereas theirs was most wicked, and unholy.

Now upon a due and diligent search and enquiry into the criminall causes son prinds by the adverse party, we have been most cruelly persecuted, in our bodies, goods, and good name, we finde these six to be the chiefe and principall.

The first is, our loyalty and fidelity to our Prince, whom by the Law of God, of Nature, of our Kingdome, of Gratitude, and by our Oathes of Allegiance and Supremacy, we are bound to defend with our Lives and Fortunes; and have no warrant from the word of God with armed Force upon any pretence to resist, for by the word of God we are commanded to honour the King, 1 *Pet.* 2. 17. to feare him, *Prov.* 24. 21. to submit unto him as supreme, 1 *Pet.* 2. 13. to pray for him, 1 *Tim.* 2. 1. to be subject unto him, *Rom.* 13. 1. carefully to heed his word of Command, *Eccles.* 8. 2. and are expressly forbidden to think an ill thought of him, *Eccles.* 10. 20. to speak an ill word of him, *Exod.* 22. 28. to resist upon our perilled damnation, *Rom.* 13. 2. be being a person against whom there is no rising up, *Prov.* 30. 31. to [illegible] the lap of his garment cannot be cut off, 1 *Sam.* 24. 16. nor his body violently touched by any of his Subjects without guilt, though he be a *Saul*, 1 *Sam.* 26. 9. and be nicknamed *Malignants*, and *Delinquents*, are [illegible] Antinomians, nor Antiscripturists, [illegible] practise against so many Texts of Scripture, [illegible]

[c] God may well use ill instruments besides and beyond their owne intentions. *Quia in una re quam faciunt, causæ non una ob quam faciunt.* Aug.

which are expreſt in a commanding Forme, and all included in a ſpeciall branch of the fifth Commandement.

The ſecond criminall Cauſe for which we ſuffer as *Malignants* or *Delinquents*, is our conſtancy in the profeſſion of the true Proteſtant Religion for a long time proteſt in our Church, which hath been Iuſtified by the pens of our moſt famous learned Divines, ſealed by the bloud of many Martyrs, and ſetled by the ſanction of many Parliaments.

The third criminall Cauſe for which we yet ſuffer, is becauſe we will not renounce *Epiſcopacy* as Antichriſtian, Popiſh, or unlawfull, which forme of *Eccleſiaſticall* Govertment, derives its pedegree from the [d] Apoſtles, if we any credit Primitive Antiquity, and the Stories of the Church: and hath ever been approved by the Ancient Orthodox Fathers, as the beſt Forme of *Eccleſiaſticall* Regiment for curbing and ſuppreſſing all ſeditious and Schiſmaticall Spirits: power of Iuriſdiction was committed to Biſhops over Presbyters (ſaith e *Hierome*) *ut Schiſmatum ſemina tollerentur*, that the ſeeds of *Schiſme* might be taken away out of the Church, for if *Biſhops*, f *ſaith he, were not placed above and before the reſt of the Presbyters, non in Eccleſia efficerentur Schiſmata, quot Sacerdotes, there would be as many Scifmes in the Church, as there are Priests; hence commeth it*, ſaith g *Cyprian*, that *the bond of the Lords peace is broken, that brotherly love is violated, of this Cauſe is it*, that Truth *is corrupted*, Unity *diſſolved, that men leane to Scifme, becauſe Priests are ſlandered, Biſhops are envied, and every man diſdaineth to have another*

[d] *See the learned Workes of B.* Bilſon *entituled,* The perpetuall Govertnement of Chriſts Church, *D.* Adrian Saravia, de diverſis Miniſterii gradibus, *B.* Andrews *anſwer to* Mouton *in his* opera poſthu. Arch Biſhop *Vshers originall of Epiſcopacy,*

where Epiſcopall preheminence and authority with its iuſt claim from the Apoſtles is fully aſſerted out of approved Antiquity *and the authentick Records of the* Church. e *Epiſt. ad Evagri.* f *Hier. adverſ Iacif.* g *Cyp. de zelo & livore.*

ther above him, which saying of the Ancient we of this Church finde too true, by sad and wofull experience in these unpeaceable calamitous Times.

The fourth supposed criminall Cause for which we suffer, is because we will not submit to the new erected mixt Presbytery, as to the [h] Scepter and Standard of Christ; which fancied Scepter of Christ, is of a strange composition, and concretion, part of Clergy, part of Laity, as of old and new Cloath peeced and patcht together, and composed for the most part of such Lay Elders,

Quales ex humili magna ad fastigia rerum
Extollit, quoties voluit fortuna jocari.

Such as the Satyrist noteth, to day ---- *Dama*
Momento turpis exit:
Marcus Dama ---------- to Day a Tradesman, to Morrow a Churchman, to Day an Artificer to Morrow an Elder, likely men to make up a Piece of Christ Scepter, to command in his Royall Camp, and that in such an high transcendent, Supreame way, as to have [i] Kings and great Potentates under their censure

[h] Syms Plea pag. 150. it is the Scepter of Christ swaying in his owne house according to his owne hearts desire, the chiefe Commander in the Camp Royall.

[i] That Excommunication should not be exercised upon Kings, Tutterly mistake, T. C. huic disciplinæ omnes orbis Principes & Monarchas, fasces suos submittere & parere necesse est. Trav. de disc. Eccl. p. 142. Royalists deny the Crown and Scepter to be under the coersive Power of the Presbyteries, we professe that they have the keyes of the kingdome of God to shut out Princes by the censure of Excommunication. Rutherford if that Book entituled Lex & Rex be his, so that our late Soveraigne King James of blessed memory did not say without cause, (in the Conference at Hampton-Court) That there could be no friendly agreement betwixt a Presbytery and a Monarchy; once, said he, let that Government be set up, and Bishops pull'd downe, then I shall have Jack and Will, Dick and Tom to meet, and at their pleasures to censure me, my Counsell and all our proceedings; then Will shall stand up and say, it must be thus, and Dick will stand up and say, nay, but we will have it thus, and what they say and decree in their meetings must go for a Law, though it be to the prejudice and overthrow of Regall Supremacy.

Power

Power, and *Ecclesiasticall* censures, to shut them out of the Church by the censure of Excommunication, if their Scepters will not duck to their discipline: which disciplinarian Regiment was never erected in any Church for well-nigh fifteen hundred yeares after Christ, nor scarce ever setled in any place since, but by Sacriledge, Civill Warres, and popular Insurrections, an improbable way for Christ the Patterne of meeknesse to settle his Scepter by.

The fift supposed criminall Cause for which we have suffered so much, Is because with some of her unnaturall Sonnes, we will not call our Mother, the Church of *England*, *where*, nor charge her to have lived in perpetuall Adulteries and Rebellions, to her Husband Christ, but stand up to vindicate her chastity against *Rhemes*, and *Amsterdam*, That she is a true chast Spouse of Christ, free from Novelty, Idolatry, and superstition; and that for the Purity, Beauty, and comely Order of her publike worship, in her prescribed forme of Administring the Sacraments, and of tendring up her Prayers and Prayses to God, she was, and we hope will continue to be the glory of all Protestant Churches, and the envie of the Romish Synagogue.

The sixth and last Cause for which we suffer, Is because we will not be perswaded to believe, That the Protestant Religion amongst us was growne so Popish, and our Church so corrupted, and degenerated, that it stood in need of a bloody Sword to Purge, and Reforme it, yea, such a Sword as might be springed against the minde, and without specification of Warrant from the Supreame Magistrate.

Whereas still, We cannot believe till we see it better proved, and *Hooker* assureth, that Popery and defection had

had made such a large step into our Church as is pretended. Secondly, If any Popish enormity or adventitious abuses, were crept into the Church, above or besides its legall Constitution, His Majesty was pleased to have them removed in an orderly, peaceable way, and gave his free Royall assent that the Church should be reduced to its pristine forme and beauty, as it stood by Law establisht under Queen *Elizabeth* and King *James*, Princes renowned through the World for their Piety and Wisedom. Thirdly, We cannot finde any Commission in the Word of God (though we have perused it with a diligent observant eye) for Subjects of what ranck or quality soever to attempt a Reformation without the consent of him to whom they are subjects, either plainely expresst, or reasonably presum'd, much lesse against his consent, least of all to enter into a solemn League and Covenant to reforme by the Sword, things formerly setled, whether in the Church, or State.

k In His Majesties Message to both houses of Parliament, Ian. 20. 1641. *wherein he moveth them with all speed to fall into a serious consideration of those particulars which they should hold necessary for the security of the true Religion, professed in the Church of England, & the setling of Ceremonies in such a decent orderly manner, as might take away all just occasion of offence.*

For all the approved Publique Reformations that we reade of in the Scripture, were made by Royall Authority. King l *Asa* took away the Altars of strange gods, &c. m *Jehoshaphat* the King took away the high places and groves out of Juda, &c. and so brought all the people again to the Lord God of their Fathers. *King* n *Hezekiah*, o removed the high places, cut down the groves, and brake the Images in pieces, &c. o *Manasses* repenting, took away those strange gods, and Images, which he had set up, &c. *King* p *Josias* purged *Judah*, *Jerusalem*, and the Temple of God, destroying all the Monuments of Idolatry that were there in, &c. These and all other famous Reformations registred and commended in the Scripture,

l 2 Chron. 14. 4. m 2 Chron. 17. 5 n 2 Chron. 19. 4. o 2 Kings 18. 4. &c.
o 2 Chron. 33. 3. 15. p 2 Kings 23. 6.

were

were done by Royall or Soveraign Authority; and we do nor reade that ever any of the 9 Prophets encouraged the collective, or representative body, to redresse and reforme abuses in the Church or State, (though things were never so much out of Order) unlesse they were lawfully authorised thereunto, by the Supreame Magistrate, & *quoad non Legimus, non Credimus.*

Nor do we reade that any solemne Covenant for Reforming Religion was ever entred into, but by speciall leave, and authority from the higher power: There are onely six nationall Covenants mentioned in the Scripture, and take a view of them all severally (*Jos.* 24. 25. 2 *Kings* 11. 14. 2 *Chron.* 15. 12. 29. 10. 34. 40. *Esra* 10. 3. *compared with Esra* 4. 23. 24.) and you shall find that none of them were framed or imposed without, much lesse against Soveraigne Authority: If any object the Covenant of *Jehoiada* in the reigne of *Joas*, 2 *Kings* 11. 4. let him remember, that this was the high Priests Act, not as high Priest, but as Governour of the *King*, and that he did it by the same Authority and Power, by which he Dethroned usurping *Athalia*, armed the Subjects, & enthroned *Joash*.

Were there then no other materiall exceptions against the solemn League and Covenant (as there are many other taken, we think justly, by the *Universitie of Oxford* in a full Convocation) yet out of a Religious respect of our duty both to God and our Soveraign, we dare not dispence with our Consciences to enter into it, because we doubt whether God will allow the urging or taking of any such Covenant, as hath not stampt upon it the impresse of a Royall assent and approbation.

To give you a briefe summe of that which hath been more fully enlarged in the severall particulars. If to be truely loyall to our Soveraign which is his royall due; to be constant in that profest Religion of our Church, which hath

9 Vide Davenantii determinat. 12. *Where he proves out of Scripture, Councels, Fathers, and in a rationall way, That none may attempt a Reformation against the mind or will of the Supream Magistrate, though the Church stand in never so much need of Reforming.*

hath been justified against all Communion and opposers, and watered with the bloud of Martyrs; if not to renounce that forme of *Ecclesiasticall Government*, which hath been approved by Antiquity for Apostolicall, and the best Forme of Regiment to keep Schisme out of the Church, and Faction out of the State, and *which no Christian Church that we reade of, perceived the word of God to be against, for fifteen hundred years, but rather to be for it*, if to refuse submission to a mixt usurping Presbytery, that sets Princes a foot, and servants on horse back, and was seldom reared up any where, but by Sacriledge, Civill war, the diminishing of Regall, and the abolishing of *Episcopall Authority*. If to honour that Church, which doth deserve to be esteemed the glory of all Protestant Churches, and deny subscription to that Covenant which we think not allowable by the word of God (as peccant in the matter, and wanting the stamp of a royall approbation to legitimate the forme of it) and therefore cannot be taken by us without a wavering hesitation, or scruple of Conscience; If all or any of these, be crimes of such ill-deserving quality, that they deserve the utmost extremitie of Persecution, then persecute us still, and conceive that in so doing you doe God good service, but know, that with S. *Paul*, we passe little to be judged of you, or of mans judgement, in such a Cause, as that is, for which we suffer; and we exhort you, our persecutors, not to judge us too extreamely, before the time, untill the Lord come, who we are assured will reverse your judgement, and then we shall receive praise of him for those very things, which you now persecute us for; 1 Cor. 4. 1. 2.

e Hooker in the Preface to his Eccles. Polit.

Lastly, because sometimes we hear in open faced Assemblyes, no other epethites vouchsafe us from, then Popish brazenfact *Malignants*, and that by some of your grave Doctors, give us leave for close of all to oppose to

them

such false slanderous obtrectations, this Profession of our Faith and Hope, as our just Vindication.

Our Faith.

WE Beleeve the Contents of the Apostles, Athanasian, and Nicene Creeds, and all that God hath delivered to us by Moses, the Prophets, and Apostles in the Old and New Testament, and convince us out of these to be in an error, or that we have bin misguided in our judgements, and we will yeeld. *More especially, we Beleeve to be justified, not by our own works of righteousnesse (which we* [t] *unprofitable servants and prodigall Children have done) but by the* [u] *mercies of God, purchased unto us by the bloudy Merits of Jesus Christ, and applied to our soules by the hand of a true* [w] *lively Faith, by which Christ comes to* [x] *dwell in our hearts, and is so made ours, that we come to have a spirituall Union,* [y] *and Communion with him: we Beleeve also, That in this particular visible Church of ours (before the late begun Deformation) Gods word was as truely Preached, his Sacraments, the Seales of his word, as duely, and purely Administred, his name in our sacred publique Assemblies, as faithfully invocated, and called upon, as in any of those Reformed Churches, that are now most magnified: And we Hope to passe hereafter from Death to Life, and to be partakers of that Kingdom of Glory, which God hath promised, and Jesus Christ hath purchased, for all those, and onely for those that truely* [z] *Beleeve in him, and are carefull to evidence the truth of their Faith by a holy desire, care, and indeavour to walk in all his holy Commandements:* and if this be the Faith and Hope of Popish brazenfacit *Malignants*, we pray you to tell us, what is your *Antipopish, Antimalignant Faith or Hope.*

Our Hope.

But it is our comfort, That Innocency may be under the Martyrdom of the *Tongue*, as well as the *Hand*; Christ, the Prophets, and Apostles, were branded with the black

[t] Luke 17 10 & 15. 21.
[u] Rom. 3. 25. & 4. 5.
[w] Ephes 2, 8
[x] Ephe. 3. 17
[y] 1 John 1. 3.
[z] 2 John 3. 3 Gal. 5. 6. 1 Cor. 7. 19. Heb 5. 9. Acts 24. 16.

marks

markes of seditious incendiaries, and we shall not be ashamed to weare *that*, or the like *Livery*, or think much to taste of that *Cup* which Christ our Lord and Master drank of; if we cannot keep a good Conscience with God, and credit with men, we will * dismisse the latter, to retain the former, and doe heartily pray for those who slander and persecute us, that God would not lay these sins to their charge, at that day, when all wrongs shall be righted, and all malitious Informers, false accusers, slanderers, and forgers of lyes; all oppressors, and unjust deteiners of other mens Livings, *shall be cast into the Lake that burneth with fire and brimstone*, unlesse in speciall they repent of these sins, and seek to make some kind of amends by a verball [b] acknowledgement of the wrongs done, and a reall satisfaction for the same, by way of Restitution.

* *Conscientiæ satisfaciamus nihil in famam laboremus, sequatur vel maladum bene mereamur,* Senec. *Malaopinio bene parta delectabit,* Idem.

We say no more, but onely desire you our *Persecuters*, advisedly to reade over the Prophet [c] *Obeds* Message to the *Children of Israel*, when they were minded to deale with their Brethren, the *Children of Judah* (whom they had subdued and taken *Captive*) as you have deale, and for ought we yet perceive, are minded to deale with us; think of it seriously as he there adviseth you, that you have *sins of your owne, and that the wrath of God is towards you*, for this sinne, amongst the rest, *your* [d] *unbrotherly usage of us your Brethren*; and remember, *That there shall be* [e] *Judgement mercilesse to them that will shew no mercy*. God give you grace to consider it, and all of us grace truely to serve him, and to [f] *humble our selves under his mighty hand*, that he may exalt us in his due time, and turne his Judgements from us, and turne againe in mercy towards us, to whom be glory for ever, *AMEN*.

[b] Nub 5.7. Exod. 22.5. & Levit.6.5

[c] 2 Chron. 28. 9.10.11.

[d] Amos 1.11

[e] Iam.2.13.

[f] 1 Pet.5.6.

The

The CHURCH of Englands Complaint, and Plea.

WHat are you doing? shall I be honoured of Strangers abroad, and will you (my *Children*) who were conceiv'd in my Wombe, tenderly Nurst at my Breasts, most of you trained up in my *Universities*, famous for Learning and Piety) dishonour *Me* at home? Heare the ample, yet not flattering, Testimonies, which two Reverend Divines of *Genevah* late gave of *me*. *The flourishing Church of England*, saith *Deodate*, (the famous Professor of Divinity, and Vigilant Pastor of *Genevah*) *is the very Eye and Excellencie of all the Churches, Christ own Choyce Purchase, and peculiar --- the Sanctuary of the Afflicted, the Royall Standard of good hope*; and he spoke this of *Me*, as I flourished for a long time under the happy Reigne of three Pious Princes, till these unhappy broyles fell out; so farre was he from judging me corrupt in Doctrine, or Antichristian in discipline, That he avowes *Me* by expresse attestation, against all Calumniators, *to be the best, and most excellently Reformed Church that* Europe *yeildeth*. A like honourable, and more ample Testimony doth *Frederick Spanhemius* (a Pastor also and Professor

D. Deodat: Geneven: respons. ad convent: Ecclesiast. Lond.

Epist Dedicat. Reverendiss. presuli Iacobo Usherio Archiepis. Armachano, ut & illustriss. comitibus Philiberto Herberto, &c. præfixa fortiæ parti Dubiorum Evangeliorum.

of Divinity in the same Church and University of Genevah) gave of me, *I often call to minde, saith he,* That *your truely fortunate Island, and that felicity which seems to have flit from the rest of the Europæan world unto you, the appendant of your piety, which many yeares since to my exceeding comfort, I observed to flourish in all rancks of men, high and low, inhabiting your* Britain: *I often represented to my eyes that gratefull face, and spectacle of your Churches, that reverence of yours in the publique exercises of Devotion, that attention, ardor, and fervor of yours in the worship of God; that Zeale of your Nobles, and inferiour sort; that your publique and domestick piety, the genuine vertue of your Nation, to which in vaine almost we seek a Paralell any where else, and cannot finde it: How great a blessing and gift of God this is, in which all others are comprehended, and from which they may be expected, they know best, who knew how to estimate things according to their worth, and value, and are wont often to cast up their accounts with God: and although all the Kingdoms that are under the Government of your most gracious, high, and mighty Prince doe abound with most learned Prelates, and eminent Divines, who have approved their accurate judgements to the Christian world, by all kinde of accurate writings, yet you may by good right challenge that part of piety to your selves, as your own peculiar, which leadeth to practise, and is the very sap and marrow of all true Divinity: this the exquisite writings of your men in that kind, doe evidently shew, which have been, and are at this day Translated into Languages of other Nations, to the immortall credit of yours: But howsoever this practicall Divinity, may seem your peculiar, there have not been wanting of your Bishops, and other Divines, (by the grace of God incomparable men) who with excellent learning, and rare*

successe,

successe, have handled Polemicall points, and asserted the Orthodoxall verity, from the subtile Sophismes, and polished cavills of the Romish Dawbers.

This I have written not as a monument onely of my private respect towards you, but with the good leave of my Superiours, I have liberty to call it, A Publique Testimoniall of the respect of our famous Republick, towards your most renowned King, for whose health and happinesse we dayly poure forth our Prayers to God, as also of our inlarged affections towards all the Britain Churches, whose Reverend Prelates, faithfull Pastors, flourishing Flocks, we admire, and lovingly embrace, and doe pray that God would continue to you a constant care of the Orthodox Truth, a joynt well-wishing love to sincere Piety, an unanimity in judgement, and a capacity of that happinesse which God hath bestowed upon you; that God may have his Glory, the King his Right, the Bishops their Authority, the Pastors their due Honour, and your Churches may have their tranquility, sanctity and peace reserved to them entire. I have Translated his words to the full, that you may fully see how much Foreigners admire, and commend *me*, my Publique Service, my principall Guides, and Pastors, whom you too much undervalue, and discredit.

But I need not look abroad for commendatory Testimonialls, my owne learned pretious *Jewell* at home, hath written my Apology, wherein you shall finde all the parts of my Doctrine, worship, discipline, governement, proved by Scripture, and by the consent of all learned, and godly Antiquity, for the space of certain hundred yeares after Christ; which Apology, not onely *Peter*

Accessimus quantum maxime potuimus ad Ecclesiam Apostolorum, & veterum Catholicorum Episcoporum & Patrum, non tantum Doctrinam nostram sed etiam Sacramenta, precumque publicarum formam ad eorum ritus & instituta dirimus, Jewel Apol. pro Eccles. Anglic. pag. 176. 177.

Martyr in his little Epistle set before the same; but *Bullinger*, *Gualter*, *Wolphius*, and other learned men of the Church of *Tigure* together with him, doe highly approve for a most eloquent, admirable, judicious peece, such, as that age had scarce the like extant, in Defence of the Protestant Cause.

And yet I will further adde (because you constraine *me* to speak forth my owne prayses) that since my happy begun Reformation, I have had, and at this day have, more rare ornaments of divinely learned men (*rumpantur ut ilia Momo*) then any, or all the *Reformed Churches* in *Europe*, whose State you seek to frame, and reforme *me* unto.

But, oh hatefull ingratitude! how to the high dishonour of God, the disgrace of his Gospell, the Impeachment of *My* Reputation, are *My* chiefe Ministers, both Bishops and others, scorned, vilified, contemned persecuted, of whom an unthankfull People are not worthy? he that can most bitterly enveigh against them, most boldly blazon their discredits, most uncharitably slander their lives, is reputed by others, and esteemeth himselfe the most zealous, earnest furtherer of the Gospell: a lamentable time it is, wherein such intemperate liberty of the Tongue is permitted, without any bridle of restraint; he that loveth my glorious Bridegroome, *me* his Spouse, his Prince, and Country, and hath any feare of Gods judgements, he cannot but dread in his heart the fearefull sequel of this contemptuous, harsh, despightfull dealing with *my* Ministery: When Gods peculiar People, the Jewes misused his Messengers, and evill entreated those that were sent unto them, his wrath was so highly incensed against them, that he not once, but often, exposed both them and their Country, to the spoyl of the Enemy,

2 *Chron.*

2 *Chron.* 36. 15. 16. 17. *Matth.* 23. 34. 37. and will God, think you, be worse to blesse in one age, what he hath cursed in another? Is he a changeable God, or is his hand shortned, that he cannot revenge the contempt and hard usage of his Ministers, as he was wont to doe. Deceive not your selves, if you abuse his *Messengers* and *Ministers* as they did, you shall be plagued as they were, *eorum exitus perhorrescite quorum facta imitamini.*

Ob. *But perhaps you will say, I doe ill to compare the Prophets, Apostles, and other true Ministers, and Messengers of God, with such Antichristian Prelates, and blinde Guides, as those of My Clergy are, whom I now pleade for.*

A.S. I doe not compare them in worthinesse, or eminency of *Gifts, and Graces*, but in likenesse of Office, and Ministery; they teach the same truth of Doctrine, and the same way of Salvation, that the Prophets, and Apostles did, and are the Messengers of God to his People, as they were; and howsoever, they being but frail, sinfull men, in comparison of those blessed Saints, and holy men of God, may sometimes through humane frailty, and infirmity, minister occasion to have their *Ministery* evill spoken of; yet, God forbid, the tenth part of that should be true, which malitious Tongues have forged, and uttered against them.

The best *Ministers of God*, have in all Ages been subject to the most obloquies, and reproach; in particular, what foule aspersions were cast upon *Athanasius*, that excellent servant of God, who stoutly maintained the Orthodox truth, against a world of oppositions? his enemies affirmed, with great impudency, that he had unjustly excommunicated divers persons, that he had committed Adultery with a Strumpet, who was brought before his face to avouch it to be true, that he had murdered one *Arsenius*,

Vide Lucill. Apol p. 2. 3. 4. &c. Athan. Apol. 2. Socrat lib. 1. cap. 30.

Arsenius, and used his arme to work Sorcery with; and as they dealt with *Athanasius*, so did they with *Eustathius*, *Macarius*, *Ambrose*, *Chrysostome*, and other godly Bishops, most of whom, they caused by their infamous, scandalous reports, to be outed their Bishoprick, driven into Banishment, or put to death.

And why may not the like hard lot befall *my* Reverend Prelates, and others of my ablest conformable *Ministers*; especially in these dayes, when they have to deale with so many, and divers kinds of enemies, that it is not possible for them faithfully to discharge their duties, and not to have many mouthes wide open to slander and discredit them? On the one side is the Papist, whose errors they have confuted, and to whose Popish Doctrines they have given the deadliest blowes, and most incureable wounds, that ever they received: On the other side are the phantasticall spirits of the *Anabaptists*, *Brownists*, *Familists*, *Antinomians*, and sundry other of like sort, whose opinions, practises, new models of Church Government, tending to Schisme, Faction, Rebellion, Anarchy, Confusion; they opposed, refuted, condemned, and so repressed, that they could not make any head to disturbe *my* well setled Peace, whilest they had any Authority; besides these, there are a number more of Seditious Persons, who hate, defame them, and wish them taken out of the way, that they may make a prey of *my* Patrimony, which with great hope they have long gaped for, not caring what become of Religion, *Me*, or *my Ministers*, so they may get *my* Houses into their possession, and partake of the spoile of *my* Cathedrals, or other Church Livings; and seeing the Bishops, and the Chiefe of *my* Clergy are beset with so many Enemies on every side, no marvell though their blemishes be amplified to the utmost,

and

and of every molehill (as the Proverbe is) a Mountaine be made.

But admit some of them were more grievous offenders then might stand with the honour, worthinesse, and dignity of their calling, even such as they are given out to be, shall all smart for the offences of some? or shall the faults of a few, prejudice the sacred Order of Episcopacy, to the utter exturpation of it, Root and Branch?

Some of the Nobility, are puft up with pride, surfet of Prosperity, let loose the reines to all injustice, violence, cruelty, breake the bonds of discipline, promise to themselves impunity; will you root out the whole race of the Nobility? Many Knights, Gentlemen, and Landlords in the Country, grinde the faces of their poore Tenents, enhaunse their Rents, take great fines, keep them in unchristian Slavery, and Bondage, for the maintenance of their pride in apparell, excesse in diet, and their unnecessary pleasures, in rioting, gaming, and such like sinfull vanities; will you have no Knights, Gentlemen, or Landlords? Some Judges have turned aside after lucre, and took bribes to pervert Judgement, refusing to doe right to the Widdow, or justice to the poore, and fatherlesse; must all Judges fare the worse for the fault of some, and shall there be hereafter no administration of justice? Some Marchants doe diminish the quantities, corrupt the qualities of their Wares, and use lying, cosenage, swearing, forswearing, all the Devills broderies to sell, and put them off; will you condemne the Trade of Merchandizing? If your Commission be of God, doubtlesse it extends to the utter extirpation of the one, as well as of the other, for with *God* there is no *accepcion, or respect of Persons*, and what troubles, seditions, warres, tumults, should we see over all the Christian World, were

Deut. 10. 17. 2 Chron. 19. 7. Iob 34. 19. Acts 10. 34.

such a large Commission once granted under the colour of a Reforming Gospell?

Here some may interpose, and say, the case is not alike, for Nobility, Knighthood, Gentry, Judicature, Marchandizing, are honours, orders, ranks, offices, callings, approved by God, so is not Prelacy, the very being of it is Antichristian, Syons Plea, pag. 46. *and will you pleade for blinde Guides and Antichristian Prelates.*

No, in no sort, but I will please that many of those my *conformable Ministers*, whom you reprove blinde guides, were as able, godly, and painfull *Ministers*, as diligent and industrious in promoting the salvation of Christian soules committed to their charge, and men of as sober, peaceable, and virtuous conversation, and as well approved of for holinesse, and integrity of their lives, and faithfulnesse in their callings when time was, as any you have put in their rooms: And I will further pleade, *That Prelacy in its being, is not Antichristian*, for to borrow the Words of one of my Sonnes, in his answer to the *Declaration of Scotland*, concerning their second expedition into *England*.

May I not reasonably think, that I am fallen into the very dregs of Time to heare these three hundred and eighteene Bishops Assembled in the Councell of Nice by Constantine the Great, who were compilers of the Nicene Creed, and did confound (as the glorious Champions of Christ) that infamous Limbe of Antichrist, Arrius, now themselves to be stiled Antichristian, by reason of their Office? Or the three hundred and fifty Bishops Assembled at Constantinople, in the second generall Councell, by Valentinian, and Theodosius, who (as the glorious Champions of Christ) cut off two other Limbes of Antichrist, Eunomius and Macedonius, should now by reason of their Office be

called

called themselves Antichristians? Or that the two hundred Bishops Assembled together in the third generall Councell, by Theodosius (who as the valiant Champions of Christ) did lop off another great Limbe of Antichrist, Nestorius, should now themselves be branded by the hellish name of the Limbes of Antichrist, meerly for their Office sake? Or that the six hundred and thirty Bishops Assembled at Caledon, in the fourth generall Councell by Martian, who rooted out two more great Limbes of Antichrist, Eutiches and Dioscorus, should now by reason of their Office be called by such an impious name? Since the whole Christian church, hath with admirable consent received their Doctrine, and ever had their Persons in singular honour, in an admirable, holy, reverent, remembrance.

Shall I beleeve that the blessed and glorious Martyr Saint Cyprian, the holy Bishop of Carthage, a Patterne of Piety in his life, and a glorious Martyr at his death? That the two incomparable lights, and Doctors of the Church, Saint Augustine Bishop of Hippo, and Saint Ambrose Bishop of Millaine, who were the hammers that Christ used for the knocking down of Pelagius, and other Antichristian Heretricks? That the great and invincible Athanasius, who composed that excellent Creed, which still carries his name? Or that Chrisostome Archbishop of Constantinople, the Boanerges, and most unparalell'd Preacher the world ever heard since the Apostles dayes? Shall I beleeve that these, or any of these, and thousand other such Bishops of the Christian world, may justly be called by the names of Limbes and Members of Antichrist, whose names for their zeale to the glory of Christ, maugre all opposition, have ever been, and ever will continue to be sweet, and precious, through all Generations.

Lastly, shall I give my assent that Cranmer, Ridley, Latimer,

timer, Hooper, Grindall, Tindall, Juell, Babington, Abbots, Lake, Hall, Andrews, Vther, Morton, Davenant, *and many besides both dead and living, should be reputed Limbs of Antichrist, who have been the maine oppugners of all Antichristian Doctrine with their Pens, and some of them laid down their pretious Lives in opposition of the Romish Antichristian Tyranny?* Oh *my* Children, think not, speak not so uncharitably of them, doe not so foulely blaspheme those excellent worthies and servants of the most high God! least through their sides you give a mortall wound to *me* your *Mother*, and to the Doctrine which by them hath now these many yeares been Preacht and Taught amongst you.

To passe from *my* Hierarchy, to *my* Liturgy, I cannot but wonder (*my Sonnes*) what should come into your minds to abolish it, which as *my* Princely and Royall penn tells you *was compiled in the times of Reformation, and confirmed by the Martyrdome of many, and established by Act of Parliament, in the time of King Edward the sixth, and never repeal'd or lay'd aside, save only in the short time of Queen Maryes Reigne, upon the returne of Popery and Superstition, and in the first yeare of Queen Elizabeth, was revived, and Established againe by Act of Parliament, and the former Repeale of it, then Declared by the whole Parliament to have been to the great decay of the due honour of God, and discomfort to the Professors of the Truth of Christs Religion; and ever since it hath been used for above fourescore yeares together (in the best times of Peace and plenty, that ever this Kingdome enjoyed) and it containes in it an excellent Forme of Gods worship and Service, grounded upon Scriptures, and is a singular help to Devotion in all Congregations, and a meanes to keep up an Uniformity in the Church, and that for some other of like*

See the Kings Proclamation cõmanding the use of the Book of Common Prayer according to the Law, Novemb. 13 1645.

forme

forme simply necessary, in those Congregations which cannot be otherwise supplied by learned able men, unlesse they shall be left wholly destitute of all meanes for the Publique worship and Service of God. The Assembly-men likewise doe confesse, *That many godly learned men did rejoyce much in my Book of Common Prayer, when it was set forth, and many of the common sort did receive benefit by it.* *In the Preface to the Directory.*

Now if it was Compiled by Pious Learned men, and many pious learned men did rejoyce much in the use of it, and many of the common sort of people receive benefit by it; and if it served as a meanes to keep up uniformity in the Church, and the repeale of it but for a short time, did occasion great decay of the due honour of God, and much discomfort to the true Professors of Christian Religion; What may I think of you, *my Sonnes*, who have not onely repeal'd it for a time, but done your utmost endeavour to have it abolished for ever? *would you have Religion to decay, God to be roll'd of his due honour? the godly to be grieved, or a deformity in Gods worship, in stead of an uniformity? and would you abridge my common sort of people of that forme of Service, which tended much to your benefit?*

Had there been left any of the least refuse drosse of Popery, or Superstition *in My Service Book*, you had free leave to reforme it; but never yet could I see any exceptions taken against it, or any passage in it, which have not received full, particular, abundant satisfaction, from the learned Pens of *my Hooker, Covell, Hutton, Fisher &c.* nor hath ever any thing been vented against it, but Aire, and Vapour, objections of little force to conclude ought else, but onely thereto are, commonly either Ignorance, or malice of the objector. *My Cranmer* offered, to be might have the assistance of *Peter Martyr*, and a few

others, to prove against all gainsayers, who were of a contrary opinion, *That all things in it were agreeable to the Word of God, correspondent to that which Christ and his Apostles delivered, and the Primitive times observed.*

And the Compilers, and Framers of it, being those famous Bishops and others, who in Queen *Maryes* dayes, delivered up their very bodies to the fire, or escaping the fire, endured Banishment, because they would not yeeld to Popery, or Superstition: how these men who for resisting even to bloud, Idolatry, Popery, and Superstition, should Compile a Book that was Popish, and Superstitious? requireth more then an ordinary understanding to apprehend it: and, I suppose, no Pen at this day is able to prove it.

The Assembly-men who have laboured as much as they could to *deprave my Service Book*, and to render it odious, durst not directly charge it with Superstition, but onely that it was found by experience to be *offensive, burthensome, inconvenient, &c.* all which, and sundry other like charges of theirs, one of *my* learned conformable *Sonnes*, *Doctor Hammond*, hath fully discovered, *and shewed them to be causelesse, groundlesse, unconcludent, and for the most part, meere calumnies*, in his Treatise entituled, *A View of the Directory, and a Vindication of My Ancient Liturgy.*

Have I not then just reason to complain, That by a kind of Sacrilegious and injurious Act, you have rob'd God of such Worship and Service, as by *me* and the whole State have for a long time been devoted unto him? and besides have done a common injury to the whole Kingdom, to the Kings Majesty himselfe, his gracious Queen, his lovely and Princely Children; to the Lords, Nobles, Bishops, Magistrates, to all estates of people, by depri-

depriving them of my publique suffrages, which amongst all religious and holy men, were ever esteemed farre more * pleasing to God, and more * prevailing with him (being offered up by the generall vote of all the Land, in one uniforme consent, and as it were, with one heart, and with one voyce) then the singular affected devotions of private spirits, who pray in the Church sometimes so ignorantly, that it is a shame to have the Majesty of God so called upon, sometimes so seditiously, that their Prayers are plain Libels, girding at Soveraigne power, and Authority; sometimes they so wander either for error or malice, in framing their Prayers answerable to their affections, that no true conscientious Christian can in charity, when they have done, say, *Amen* to them. For the preventing of which, and the like inconveniences, my pious, prudent Reformers, thought it requisite, if not necessary, that an unity, and uniformity should be prescribed in my publique Prayer, Liturgy, or Service, that all the People of the Land might all in one manner, all in one order, all with one consent and universall sound, tender up their devotions to God, who is a *God of Order and Unity*, and loves to be called upon by a multitude of People, in an *uniforme and orderly manner*, 1 Cor. 14. 33. 40.

* *Coimus in cetum ut ad Deum quasi manu facta precationibus ambiamus orantes, hoc vis Deo grata.* Tert. Apol. c. 39.

* *Amat ut multi rogent* Amb. lib. 2. de pœn. cap. 10.

The greatnesse, and indeed the happinesse of which blessing, my Tongue cannot possibly expresse unto you, only think upon it, *my Children*, what a blessing and happinesse you have had, that you have lived to serve God in *Bethel, the house of God: in Sion, and Jerusalem, the true Church of God, that hath been to you, a City of Peace, and not in Beth-aven, an house of Vanity, or Babilon, a City of confusion.*

For have you not had a long tranquility, an happy

Peace,

Peace, with all the blessed fruits thereof, continued unto you all the time of the happy, peaceable Government of Queen *Elizabeth*, and King *James* (whose sacred spirits doe now rest and raigne with the Lord, and whose memories shall be blessed and eternized in the World for ever) such, and so happy a peace never did your Fathers or Ancestors see before you, nor have any of the Neighbour Nations enjoyed the like, who were in the meane time often wearied, and wasted, either with Forraigne, or Intestine Warres, whil'st you lived in peace, and plenty, and never did God withdraw his rich mercies, and blessings from you, *till you evill entreated my conformable Clergy, cast off my Prelacy, disrelished my Publique Service, waxed weary of my Government, and aspersed me your Mother with unjust calumnies.*

Remember then *from whence you are fallen*, what in part hath occasioned your fall, *and repent*, *Rev.* 2. 5. and to testifie your Repentance, reforme what is amisse in your selves, what hath been any way scandalous, in any of *my Bishops*, or conformable *Ministers*, what outward ceremonies, rites, have displeased tender Consciences, though not offensive in themselves, and then think of a way by restrictive Lawes, to curbe the changeable Humours, and extravagancies of men, and to regulate all exorbitant fancies of Novelists, in the exercise of holy Religion; but if you love *mine* and the Kingdoms safety, *let my Prelacy and Liturgy stand*, least those many mischiefes befall *me* and this Kingdome, which *Hooker* (a beloved Sonne of *mine*) hath forewarned you, (in his Preface to *my* Ecclesiasticall Polity) will unavoydably follow upon *tam insignem mutationem*, so grand and notable a change, as the utter extirpation of the one, and the totall abolition of the other, will necessarily cause.

Which

Which Preface of his, had you, *my Sonnes*, read over with mature deliberation, and diligently observed those rules of Christian piety and prudence, that there are held forth unto you in the whole frame of *my* Government, I had not by the sudden violent alteration of it, been exposed to those many woefull wasting Divisions under which I yet groane, and of which I still justly complaine: The Lord give you a right understanding in all things, and so order all your consultations, as may make most to his glory, the advancement of true Religion and Piety, *my* peace and welfare: that you may come once more to live *a quiet and peaceable life, in all godlinesse and honesty*, under the Religious Government of your gracious Soveraigne, whom the same Lord long preserve to raigne over you a happy King of many blessings, *AMEN*.

Soli Deo Gloria.

The feeling Lamentation of a Compassionate Sonne, for his much distressed, and unjustly defamed Mother, the Church of England.

ALas my Deare Mother! how is the *Crowne fallen from thine head?* thine honour stained and laid in the dust? *woe unto us that we have sinned*, else this could not have befallen thee: thou who wast once famed all abroad, by the Pens of *thy* most famous legitimate Children, for the verity of *thy* Doctrine, the well tempered severity of *thy* discipline, the purity and comely Lam. 5. 16.

comely order of thy publike worship, the Apostolicall and Primitive forme of thy *Ecclesiasticall Government*: How art thou now defamed all abroad, for thy errors in Doctrine, thy looſeneſſe in diſcipline, thy Popiſh Superſtition in Worſhip, thy Antichriſtian uſurpation in Government, by the Pens of thy unnaturall, undutifull *Children*? who looking upon thee through Spectacles borrowed from *Munſter* or *Amſterdam*, have by the helpe of thoſe falſe perſpectives, diſcovered thoſe errors in thy Doctrine, that looſeneſſe in thy Diſcipline, that Popiſh Superſtition in thy worſhip, that Antichriſtian uſurpation in thy Government, which all thy glorious Martyrs and famous Divines (men renowned for learning, and piety, through the Chriſtian World) were never able for foureſcore yeares to ſee, or diſcover to be in them, by the Chriſtall Spectacles of Gods Word, and the cleare light of Primitive Antiquity.

Oh that thou had'ſt thy old Guides to guide thy *Children* ſtill, for while ſt thou had'ſt thy old *Epiſcopall Guides* to guide them in the old way, which is the good way, *they found reſt to their ſoules*, Jer. 6. 16, *and held the unity of the ſpirit in the bond of peace*, Epheſ. 4. 3. *being of one minde, and of one judgement, as the Apoſtle earneſtly beſeeches Chriſtians to be*, 1 Cor. 1. 10. Phil. 2. 2 but ſince they have had new Preſbyterian guides appointed to guide both thee and them, and thoſe who ought to have been their *Guides*, the *Biſhops*, how art thou all overſpread with the fretting *Gangrena* of errors, Hereſies, Blaſphemies, Sects, Sciſmes, Church-renting, Church-conſuming Diviſions.

Thy body is rent and torn into divers parts, thy people divided into divers Sects, thy Sheep are taught to deſpiſe their lawfull Paſtors, the minds of *thy Children* are diſtracted,

ſtracted, their faith is ſhaken, their piety and religious devotion much impaired, the prophane irreligious ones are ſtrengthened in their impiety, thy weak ones are ſcandalized, to the endangering of their ſoules, the Sacrilegious devourers of thy Patrimony, are heightned in their hopes, the common adverſaries of divine truths, grow and multiply without reſiſtance, thy faithfull teachers are diſpoſſeſt of their livings, without legall tryalls, and thy poore people every where oppreſſed; damnable Hereſies, ſoule-deſtroying errors, licentious libertiniſme, fearefull Anarchy, all the frothy, windy diſtempers of crazy crackt brains, are found in thee, to diſquiet & diſturbe thy peace.

Oh that thou wert as in the dayes of old, under the Religious Government of Queen *Elizabeth*, and King *James*, and as thy now moſt gracious, pious Soveraign would have thee continue to be; then would many of thy miſled, ſeduced *Children*, which are gone *to Amſterdam*, in the high way to *Munſter*, be ſoon reduced to follow *the ſootſteps of thy flock, the Tents of thy true Shepheards*, Cant. 1 8. *then Mercy and Truth would meet againe in thee, and Righteouſneſſe and Peace would ſweetly kiſſe each other.*

But hence is thy woe, thy preſſing, oppreſſing miſery, and calamity, That ſome of *thy Children* who are now cryed up for the only Orthodox teachers, have with much noyſe, and clamour in their Popular Aſſemblies, declaimed againſt thee, and charged thee with *Idolatry*, and *Superſtition in thy Service*; and by their depraving Tongues, have perſwaded even ſome of thoſe who ſhould have been thy chiefe Protectors, *that thou ſtoodſt in ſuch need to be Reformed, that thy growing Superſtition could not otherwiſe be expiated, then by ſacrificing ſome of thy conformable Children to the Sword, in a bloudy, civill, unna-*

tural Warre: Whereas might *thy* now much discountenanced and persecuted *Children* speak freely in *thy* defence, they would not doubt, with modesty, to Vindicate *thy* much blemished honour, and to prove against all opposers, that there is not any drossy refuse of *Idolatry*, or *Superstition shrined in thy Service*, but onely these pretending Reformers, were pleased so to miscall it, for their own advantage, and preferment, that by disgracing *thy* former orderly Reformation, they might have the honour to Reforme *thee* with a new kind of Reformation, *wherein thou shalt have no glory given to the thrice blessed Trinity, the Father, Sonne and Holy Ghost, in thy Publique Assemblies, no repeating of the Lords Prayer; no Rehearsall of the Apostles, Athanasius or Nicene Creeds, no telling the People their duties both to God, and their Neighbour, out of the ten Commandements, no set Hymnes of Prayse and Thanksgiving Sung, or pronounced to the honour of God, either for sending his Sonne cloathed with the servile vesture of our flesh in great humility to visite us, or for any blessing received by him; no solemne anniversary commemoration of Christs Birth, Passion, Assention, or of the visible comming down of the Holy Ghost upon the Apostles at the day of Pentecost; no outward bodily worship, nor bowing to God with lowly reverence in the Church; no Sermon, or solemne Prayer at the buriall of the Dead, to minde men of their latter end, of which most are too forgetfull; no kneeling at the receiving of the Eucharist, though it be delivered, sub habitu precantis, under the Forme of a Prayer; no Crosse in Baptisme, though it be onely for a memoriall to put the Baptised in minde, that they should not be ashamed of Christ crucified; no Font to Baptise in, wherein the Infant may be either Dipt or Sprinkled, but a Bason, which restraine the Baptiser to Sprinkling onely; nor pri-*

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vate Baptisme, though the Eunuch, the Jaylor and his Houshold were Baptised in private, and not in any open sacred Assembly; no Godfathers to undertake for the godly educating of Children, in case they should be left Orphanes, no Uniformity in Gods service, nor any prescribed Forme of Publique Prayer. All these and *sundry* number more of nicknamed Idolatries and Superstitions must be removed, to reforme *thy Reformation.*

But we will be so bold to aske where these *Imparative men* have any Scripturall Proofes for these and their like Classicall prohibitive injunctions, which they obtrude upon us from their infallible Chaires, as the Dictates of the holy spirit; or how *they* can truely be termed *Reformatores Reformers*, (when they leave no Publique Primitive Forme of Gods Worship) and not rather *Novatores Innovators.*

Deare Mother, is this to Reforme *Thee?* is it not rather so to Deforme *Thee*, that were *thy Cranmer, Ridley, Latimer*, and other thy true borne learned pious *Sonnes*, (who vindicated the credit of *thy Liturgy*, against Papists, and others) now living, they could scarce know *thee* to be their *Mother*, thou art so besmeared all over with the Christian bloud of *thy* Children, and so gashed, and mangled, that if a timely remedy be not applied, it is much to be feared thou wilt bleed to death, by the wounds which thou hast received from the hands of *thy* own Sonnes, and one Soveraigne Remedy for the curing of these *thy* yet bleeding wounds, is to apply unto *thee* the Playster of *thy* old orderly Reformation.

Wherefore I will make bold to exhort, and entreat *thy* Children in *thy* name, and more specially in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, *by whatsoever is deare unto them as Christians, by the tender mercies of God, by*

the precious drops of Christs bloud, by that exellent price of their Redemption, as they tender the Salvation of their Soules, That they would not let any affectation of Novelty, any preposterous detestation of things one abused, and after cleansed from Idolatry, any causeleſſe hatred of Prelacy, for the faults of a few Prelates, any blinde affection to Forraigne Church discipline, or government: any humour of singularity, or singular conceit of pride, that they now see more then all who lived before them, nor any needleſſe desire of neer conformity with other Protestant Churches, alienate and estrange their dutifull love and affection from *thee their Mother*; at leaſt that they would not turne such unnaturall Children, as to wound *thee* in *thy* Credit, and in stead of *Reforming*, to *Deforme Thee.*

Further that they would peaceably professe *thy* Doctrine, submit to thy Established Government, and Discipline, and serve their God publiquely, according to the prescript Forme of *thy Liturgy*, then should *thy* Children one day bleſſe themselves, that ever they had such a *Mother*, and thou should'st be bleſſed in them, and God would bleſſe both thee and them, who never withdrew his blessings of peace and plenty from them, till they waxed weary of *thy* prescribed *Liturgy*, and his blessings.

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